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1979/12/00



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BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

CHINA
XIAO Ke
December 1979

(U) NAME: Xiao Ke (Hsiao Ko) (5618/0344)
(pronounced sheeow), Army. Xiao was a Colonel General before ranks for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) were abolished in 1965.

(U) POSITION: Commandant and First Political Commissar of the PLA Military Academy (formerly the PLA Military and Political Academy) since at least July 1973; member 11th Chinese Communist Party Central Committee (CCP/CC), August 1977.



No photo available

~~(S/NOFORN)~~ SIGNIFICANCE: The emphasis on professionalization of the PLA, revising military strategy to meet the requirements of modern warfare, and the need to train junior officers for command positions have placed Xiao Ke and the PLA Military Academy in the vanguard of military modernization planning. In 1978, the PLA Military and Political Academy was reorganized into separate schools. Thus, the leadership intends to insure that military training receives more emphasis than political indoctrination. The PLA Military Academy has been visited by most foreign military delegations to Beijing. In some cases, Xiao has sought the views of delegation members on curriculum and training procedures. Military attaches from two Western European countries have been asked to address the school. Currently, the Academy is assessing China's early-1979 incursion into Vietnam with the objective of incorporating "lessons learned" into the curriculum.

(U) POLITICS: Xiao has been a Party member since 1927 and has dedicated his life to improving the effectiveness of China's armed forces. He actively advocated China's self sufficiency in arms production and modernization of the force structure in the 1950s while serving as a Vice Minister of National Defense, under Liu Bocheng. He pursued these policies, after he became Chief of the Military Training Department in 1957, so vigorously that the department was deactivated and Xiao left the military service in 1959. He then became a Vice Minister of State Farms and Land Reclamation, under Wang Zhen. In 1967, the Ministry was attacked during the Cultural Revolution. Both Xiao and Wang were removed from their positions. Xiao reappeared in March 1972, identified within a listing of PLA officers, and may then have been Commandant of the PLA Military and Political Academy. Xiao has long been a close associate of Poliburo members Nie Rongzhen and Wang Zhen.

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(U) PERSONAL DATA: Xiao was born in 1906 or 1907 in Hunan Province. As the son of a Confucian scholar, he received a thorough education, including classics in Chinese military tactics. Xiao left home soon after his father became bankrupt in the early-1920s. He has been described as shrewd and egocentric. Xiao was married in 1934 to Chien Xianfu. When the PLA awarded medals in 1955, Xiao received the Order of August First, the Order of Independence and Freedom, and the Order of Liberation—all First Class. Xiao has written at least two articles; one dealing with military training, the other a tribute to Zhu De.

(U) CAREER:

- 1926- - Journeyed to Guangzhou. Served in 65th Police Regiment (Nationalist).
- 1927-1937 - Joined Communist Party. Served as political director, 24th Division, 4th Corps. Participated in Nanchang Uprising; promoted to company commander. After defeat, returned to home county to organize guerrilla force, 1927. Led guerrilla force to join Zhu De and Red Army. Appointed company commander, 1928. Promoted regimental commander, 1929. Participated in attack on Changsha as Commander, 12th Division, 4th Corps, 1st Red Army (Commander: Zhu De), 1930. Commander, 9th Corps, 8th Corps, and 17th Division of reorganized 8th Corps. With He Long, broke forces out of Nationalist blockade and made Long March to Shaanxi (1935). Given training and regrouping assignments. Deputy division commander, 120th Division, 8th Route Army (Commander: He Long), 1937.
- 1938-1944 - Ordered by Mao to establish base in Beijing area and engage in guerrilla warfare against Japanese, 1938. Reward of US \$100,000 offered by Chiang Kai-shek for Xiao, dead or alive, 1939.
- 1945-1949 - Deputy commander, Shanxi-Zhaha-Hebei Military District (Commander: Nie Rongzhen), 1945. Suffered his only major defeat against Nationalist during assault on Guisui and Baotou, 1946; defeat adversely affected later career as field commander. Deputy commander, 2d Army Group, Northeast Field Army. Recaptured Rehe, 1948. Promoted to chief of staff, 4th Field Army; concurrently chairman of committee planning operations in southern China, 1949.

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- 1953 - Chief, Military Training Subdepartment, of now General Staff Department (Acting Chief GSD, Nei Rongzhen).
- 1954-1958 - PLA deputy to 1st National People's Congress. Appointed Member, National Defense Council, Vice Minister of National Defense (Minister: Peng Dehuai), and Deputy Chief, General Military Training Department (Chief: Liu Bocheng), 1954. As Vice Minister of National Defense, traveled to Czechoslovakia with PLA gymnastic team, 1955. Member 8th CCP/CC, 1956. Chief, Military Training Department succeeding Liu Bocheng, 1957.
- 1959-1967 - Military Training Department deactivated. Appointed Vice Minister of State Farms and Reclamation (Minister: Wang Zhen). Ministry attacked during Cultural Revolution; Wang and Xiao purged.
- 1972-Present - Rehabilitated. Appointed Commandant, PLA Military and Political Academy. Alternate Member, 10th CCP/CC, 1973. Member, 11th CCP/CC, 1977. Military schools reorganized, 1978. Appointed Commandant and First Political Commissar, PLA Military Academy.

PREPARED BY: DB-2B4, DIA

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